

EQUALITY OF RIGHTS IN THE TERRITORIES.

S P E E C H

OF

HARRISON G. BLAKE, OF OHIO.

Made in the House of Representatives, in Committee of the Whole, June 12, 1860.

Mr. BLAKE said :

"Let us have faith that right makes might ;
in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do
duty as we understand it."

That sentiment, Mr. Chairman, of ABRAHAM
LINCOLN, is worthy the head and heart of the
standard-bearer of the Republican party, and
will form the text for action of every honest
man.

Mr. Chairman, on the 27th day of last
month, I had the honor to move in this House
a preamble and resolution, which I regarded
simply announcing a self-evident principle,
and proposing a very harmless inquiry. But
gentlemen on the other side, who are always
on the lookout for "incendiary" matter, and
the greatest trouble appears to be that we
wish them so little that they can brand as
such, thought they discovered in it what their
avid appetites so much crave, and they
descended upon it with an avidity which nothing,
but the Helper book, has excited since the
commencement of the present session. No
time would be allowed for debate, and nothing
could be said at the time to explain the objects
of the resolution, but the House was driven to
an immediate vote. Some Republicans, I in-
apprehended that there might be some
mischief in it, not discoverable to the
naked eye, as they recorded their votes against
it. And even some who voted for it are per-
haps rather disposed to apologize for the act
than to defend it.

The preamble was never voted upon at all,
no member of the House has incurred any
responsibility by endorsing it. If it contains
anything "treasonable" or "incendiary," I
will bear the odium of it alone, having no one
else to divide the responsibility with me.

But, sir, after a careful review of both the
preamble and the resolution, I can discover
nothing in either to retract or apologize for—
nothing which I am unwilling to stand up to
defend—nothing but what the honest judgment
of every thinking man in the nation will
be clearly right.

Ask, sir, to have the preamble and resolu-
tion read :

Whereas the chattelizing of mankind and
the holding of persons as property are contrary
to natural justice and the fundamental prin-
ciples

of our political system, and are notoriously
a reproach to our country throughout the civil-
ized world, and a serious hindrance to the
progress of republican liberty among the na-
tions of the earth : Therefore,

"Resolved, That the Committee on the Ju-
diciary be, and the same are hereby, instruct-
ed to inquire into the expediency of reporting
a bill giving freedom to every human being
and interdicting slavery, wherever Congress
has the constitutional power to legislate on
the subject."

Now, sir, what is the first proposition con-
tained in this "terrible" preamble ?

It is, that the holding of persons as proper-
ty—making slaves of men, women, and chil-
dren—is contrary to natural justice.

Does any one dispute this ? Will any gentle-
man contend that one man can have a *natural*
right of property in another man ?

If so, I am not disposed to argue the ques-
tion with him ; for I am sure that man's mind
must be so entrenched behind a mountain of
prejudice, that no argument could ever reach
it ; and it requires more powers of reasoning
than I claim to possess, to make a self-evident
proposition more evident. It is true, my col-
league [Mr. STANTON] did, a few days since, con-
descend to argue this question briefly ; and if
anybody ever succeeded in making a self-evi-
dent truth more apparent, he is entitled to that
credit. No one, I presume, will venture to
dispute the proposition laid down by him, that
in the case of two men cast upon an uninhabited
island, one could have no right to enslave
the other, and make him his property, unless,
indeed, one should happen to be a white man
and the other a negro. In that case, it may
be that some gentlemen would contend, that
the white man would have a natural right to
enslave the negro. But how much would the
right of the white man amount to, if the negro
should in a trial of strength prove the stronger
of the two, and enslave the white man ?

The negro in that case would show that he
possessed the natural right to enslave the white
man.

But, sir, slavery in this country is not based
upon the theory that the white man has a nat-
ural right to hold the negro in bondage. If it

were, a man in whom the white blood largely predominated could not be held as a slave.

He would have a natural right to lord it over some darker-skinned brother, instead of being doomed to perpetual servitude himself. But you hold a man in slavery, who is born of a slave mother, without reference to the amount of negro blood in his veins. According to the census of 1850, there were at that time in the slave States 246,635 mulatto slaves. A man having so slight an admixture of negro blood, that you can discover no difference between him and the pure Caucasian, is, to all intents and purposes, a white man; and yet such men are held in slavery. Now, sir, if the relation of master and slave depended upon the natural right of the white man to enslave the negro, what would be the condition of a person seven-eighths white, and only one-eighth black? Could you hold the seven-eighths of white blood in bondage, because one-eighth of negro blood flowed in the same veins?

Would not such a person have just seven times as much right to his freedom as any one could have to hold him in bondage? According to this theory, of a natural right in the white man to hold the negro in slavery, it is clear that a person in whom the blood of the white race predominated could not be held as a slave. And if Southern gentlemen plant themselves upon this theory, and carry it out to its legitimate results, they will find that a process is now going on among them, which will prove vastly more destructive to their interests in slave property, than any underground railroad or John Brown raid.

Perhaps it may be claimed, however, that the slightest admixture of negro blood so taints the whole, as to reduce the unfortunate person in whose veins it flows, to the legal status of a full-blooded negro. But this theory will not hold good, because, in some, if not all of the slave States, you permit a man of negro blood, and even a full-blooded negro, if free himself, to hold slaves. In some instances, the master has a much larger proportion of negro blood in his veins, than some of those he holds in slavery. Now, if slavery was based upon the theory of a natural right in the white man to enslave the negro, this could not be. The negro or the mulatto could not hold the quadroon in slavery. Carry out the theory, and you would reverse their positions—making the slave the master, and the master the slave.

But I have pursued this argument far enough; and I trust that I have satisfied my Southern friends that their system of slavery is not based upon the theory of a natural right in one man to hold another man as property. If so, I hope they are also satisfied that the first averment in the preamble, which is simply a denial of the existence of any such natural right, is not "incendiary." It is, in fact, what Thomas Jefferson, in better language and with greater power, declared, on the 4th of July, 1776: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: 'that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty,

and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

The next proposition contained in the preamble is, that the holding of persons as property is "contrary to the fundamental principles of our political system." Will any gentleman deny this?

Sir, when our fathers resolved to sever the connection with the mother country, and set up a new political system for themselves and their posterity, they proclaimed to the world by a solemn Declaration, the cardinal principles which it was their object to establish and maintain. Where, then, shall we look for authoritative announcement of the fundamental principles upon which our political system is based, if not to that declaration? And if we look to that, what do we find? The very first great principle announced in that instrument, is, "that all men are created equal." The great principle they declared to be a "self-evident truth," and for the support of which they pledged "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor." They inscribed them upon the chief corner-stone in the foundation of our political fabric. And now, sir, is not the position, that one man has a natural right to be another man as property, in direct and flagrant conflict with every principle contained in the Declaration of Independence? And when you have succeeded in establishing this doctrine, the administration of the Government, (which I pray God you may never be able to do,) have you not essentially and fundamentally changed the Government which our fathers formed "to establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity?" You may deny the truth of these principles—you may pronounce them all the vague theories of a wild fanaticism—you may declare that what our fathers regarded as self-evident truths, in fact self-evident falsehoods—but you cannot deny that they lie at the very foundation of our political system.

Another proposition contained in the preamble, is, that slavery is "a reproach to a country throughout the civilized world, and a serious hindrance to the progress of Republican liberty among the nations of the earth."

Sir, is not this true? What civilized nation on the face of the earth does not reproach us with the great wrong, the gigantic sin, which we are inflicting upon an oppressed and downtrodden people?

What nation does not reproach us with glaring inconsistency which we present to the world, between the principles we profess and the practice we permit?

Sir, our slaveholding friends may satisfy their own consciences as to the morality and justice of "holding persons as property," but they can never satisfy the consciences of those whose interests are not involved in the question.

The verdict of the Christian world is again-

The most enlightened nations of the world do regard negro slavery, as it exists in our country, a great national sin, and therefore "a reproach to any people" who may sanction it.

It will hardly be denied that whatever tends to bring reproach and shame upon us and our institutions, must tend to the "hindrance of the progress of republican liberty among the nations of the earth."

Mr. Chairman, having said all that I deem necessary to say in defence of the preamble, now come to the resolution. And what great wrong or outrage does that propose? Why, it simply proposes that a committee of this House, profound in the knowledge of the law, shall inquire into the expediency of reporting a bill "giving freedom to every human being and interdicting slavery, wherever Congress has the constitutional power to legislate on the subject."

There is no room to cavil about the meaning and intent of this resolution. It is, that the Judiciary Committee shall inquire into the expediency of reporting a bill to abolish and prohibit slavery, wherever Congress has the constitutional power to abolish and prohibit it. It does not even indicate where it is supposed that Congress has such power over the subject; it leaves that to the inquiry of the committee, so it is supposed is fully competent to the task.

Sir, I have no desire to withhold my own opinion as to the power of Congress over this subject. I believe the power to exist in Congress to abolish and prohibit slavery in all the territory that belongs to the United States, not included within the limits of some sovereign State. This I understand to be the Republican doctrine. I do not understand that the most conservative Republicans doubt the plenary power of Congress over the subject in all our Territories, and in the District of Columbia as well. But some do doubt the expediency of exercising that power to the full extent that we possess it. Some doubt the expediency of exercising it in this District.

My honorable colleague, the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, has said that he is opposed to abolishing slavery in this District; but I understood him to be opposed to it on the ground of expediency only, and not for any lack of power over the subject. Other Republicans, doubtless, are opposed to interfering with slavery in this District for the same reason.

But, looking at slavery as I do, as a great sin against God, and crime against man, I confess I am in favor of abolishing it wherever the Constitution has given us the power. Regarding human oppression as morally wrong, and "contrary to the fundamental principles of our political system," I will not recognise the expediency of permitting that wrong to exist, where we have the constitutional power to abate it. Sir, in my judgment, it is never expedient to do that which is morally wrong; and to permit a moral wrong to continue, which we have power to abate, appears to me about the same thing as committing that wrong.

Sir, a man need covet no higher compliment than Goldsmith paid to one of England's greatest orators and statesmen, when he pronounced him "*Too fond of the right to pursue the expedient.*"

It may be, that a man may sometimes err, in too rigidly pursuing the right, to the neglect of the expedient; but, if so, I apprehend that it is an error into which politicians of this age and this country are in little danger of falling.

I desire, sir, that the people of the free States shall be entirely free from the sin and the reproach of human slavery. How can this be, so long as the institution is permitted to exist here, or in any Territory of the United States?

Slavery in this District and in the Territories is under the supreme control of Congress; and the people of the United States are responsible for its existence here and there.

The people of the slave States are responsible for slavery in the several States, because it is a matter exclusively under their control, and over which the people of the free States can have no jurisdiction. Sir, I desire whatever there is of sin about slavery shall be exclusively the property of those who desire to maintain it, and extend it all over this continent. My constituents want to bear none of the shame and reproach attached to it, and therefore would abolish it wherever the Constitution has given to Congress the power.

But, sir, in declaring it to be my individual opinion that Congress ought to abolish and prohibit slavery wherever it has the constitutional power to do so, I do not desire to commit any member of the Republican party, unwillingly, to that policy. I am willing that those who think it expedient to refrain from the exercise of this power in certain localities, shall enjoy their own opinions on the subject, and act upon them. In voting for the resolution which I proposed, they would have done no violence to such opinions. For myself, I would only inquire where our constitutional power to abolish slavery extended; and whenever that might be, I would take it for granted that it is expedient to exercise the power. But the resolution was not framed upon this theory. By proposing an inquiry into the expediency of abolishing slavery in places where our power to do so is admitted, it recognised the question of expediency as an open question, fit and proper to be considered, notwithstanding the power might be clear and unquestionable. Now, although I suppose that all Republicans admit the power of Congress to abolish slavery in every portion of our territory not included within the limits of a sovereign State, we do not all agree as to the expediency of exercising that power in certain localities, and especially in the District of Columbia. It is only on the question of expediency, however, that we differ. Why, then, is not this very question of expediency, upon which alone we do differ, a proper subject of inquiry?

Perhaps, if the subject was investigated by the learned committee to which I proposed to send the inquiry, we would all come to think

alike upon it. Perhaps the committee would be able to convince this House and the country, that it may be expedient to sanction and permit the continuance of a wrong, while we have it in our power to suppress it.

Mr. Chairman, I trust I have succeeded in satisfying the most conservative of my Republican friends, that there is nothing in the preamble or the resolution which I had the honor to propose, to startle or alarm the most timid.

I believe I have convinced my Southern friends that they contain nothing more "treasonable" and "incendiary" than the great cardinal doctrines that all Republicans subscribe to, namely, that slavery is morally wrong, and that Congress has full power to prohibit and abolish it in all our national territory.

There are, no doubt, Mr. Chairman, many Southern gentlemen who sincerely believe that there is something very unfair in a doctrine which denies to them the right to take their slaves into the Territories, and hold them there as slaves. I have no doubt they sincerely believe that this doctrine would deprive them of an equality of rights in the Territories with citizens of the free States.

And yet, sir, laying aside all question as to the morality of slavery, I cannot view the subject in that light. The rule is a general one, applicable alike to all the States. If it deprives the citizens of South Carolina of the privilege of holding slaves in the Territories, it denies to the citizens of Ohio the same privilege. The only difference is, that there are more persons in South Carolina than in Ohio who own slaves, and more, probably, who would desire to own them in any Territory to which they might emigrate. If, therefore, the rule would operate unequally on this account, the inequality would result from a difference in the circumstances and in the tastes of the people of the two States, and not from any partiality in the rule itself.

Now, sir, if we may test the fairness of the rule excluding slavery from the Territories by its effects upon the people of the South, resulting from their peculiar circumstances and tastes, may we not, with the same propriety, test the fairness of the opposite rule by its effects upon the people of the North, resulting from *their* peculiar circumstances and tastes? Southern gentlemen complain, that if you exclude slavery from the Territories, you deprive them of the privilege of using, employing, and enjoying, therein, a peculiar kind of property which they have been accustomed to use and enjoy, and which it is agreeable to their tastes and inclinations to use and enjoy, wherever they may go. They say, further, that if slavery is permitted to go into a Territory, that Territory will become a slave State, and thereby the power of the South will be increased in this House and in the electoral colleges. Already, it is said here that *twenty* Representatives on this floor are indebted to slavery for their seats, and more than twenty electoral votes were cast for James Buchanan, at the last Presidential election, based on negro slavery.

If slavery is excluded from the Territories,

it is said you exclude the augmentation of this power, by which slaveholders are permitted to have a representation based on their property in negro slaves.

With at least equal propriety, Northern men may complain, that if you permit slavery in the Territories, you deprive them of using and employing therein the means upon which they have been accustomed to rely for subsistence, and the only means, as a general rule, upon which they can rely, and subject them, besides to a mode of life and social condition wholly repugnant to their tastes and inclinations. And when the Territories come to form State Governments, they will be slave States, and the slaveholder's property will form the basis of representation here, as well as in the Legislatures of the States. It is said that, in Virginia, the mother of States and statesmen under this system of slavery, ten thousand white men in Eastern Virginia, simply by reason of their slave property, are enabled to have a great representation in one branch of the Legislature of that State as forty thousand freemen in Western Virginia. This inequality will exist wherever slavery is permitted to go.

The property which the Northern emigrant has to take with him into the Territories consists of his labor, his skill, his industry, and his ingenuity. Upon the employment of these means he must depend for a subsistence wherever he goes; and he cannot profitably employ them where negro slavery prevails.

To admit negro slavery into the Territories is to exclude free labor, to a very great extent, and to exclude free labor is to exclude immigration from the Northern and Western States. But the prohibition of slavery does not exclude or diminish immigration from the Southern States. On the contrary, it invites and increases it. It may tend to deter a class of citizens of the South from emigrating to the Territories, but they are not only much the smaller class, in point of numbers, but the class least disposed to emigrate. The most numerous classes of the population of the South (the non-slaveholding classes) are as much interested in excluding slavery from the Territories as the people of the free States. And they are not only by far the most numerous class in the South, but emphatically the emigrating class of that section. Why, sir, there is no class of people in this Union so eager to emigrate as the non-slaveholders of the South. They do emigrate, just as fast as they can command the means of so doing; and when they emigrate, they almost invariably strike for free territory. They have felt the heavy hand of slavery, pressing them to the dust; and whenever they can, they flee from it, as from a pestilence.

Sir, for every slaveholder that would be excluded from the Territories by prohibiting slavery therein, at least twenty free laborers would be excluded by establishing it; and yet we are told that slavery must be permitted to go into all the Territories, to secure equality of rights in them, and to the Southern States.

Sir, what kind of equality is that which accommodates twenty men to accommodate one

man? What kind of equality is that which permits a slaveholder to have a representation in the legislation of the country based on his property in slaves, and at the same time deprives the non-slaveholder of any representation on his property? That is the kind of equality, sir, that the wolf shows to the lamb when he seizes and devours it.

There is something apparently paradoxical in the proposition, that one portion of a community must be permitted to hold another portion in bondage, in order to produce equality of rights and privileges. But when our Southern friends talk of equality of rights, they must be understood as speaking after the manner of a certain august tribunal, and as recognising the doctrine announced by it, that in this country negroes can "have no rights which white men are bound to respect." They must be understood as excluding the negroes altogether from the class of men who have any business to claim rights or privileges. But, even conceding, for the sake of the argument, (which I by no means admit to be true,) the truth of this abominable dogma, it can be shown that scarcely anything could so much tend to inequality of rights in the Territories, to the laboring men of this Republic, as to extend slavery over them.

You may tell me that the non-slaveholders of the South indicate by their votes that they are in favor of taking slavery into the Territories—that they aid in sending men here to advocate and vote for that policy, and to threaten to dissolve the Union if it is thwarted. Why, sir, these people can scarcely be said to have any opinions of their own on political subjects. It is one of the evils that slavery inflicts upon them, that it keeps them in poverty and ignorance, and builds up an aristocracy to think for them and to govern them.

Public opinion on political subjects in the slaveholding States is dictated and controlled by the slaveholding classes. Practically, they are the only classes represented, either in Congress or in their State Legislatures. Although the non-slaveholders of the South may appear to indicate by their votes that they are in favor of extending slavery over the Territories, yet when you bring them to a practical test, you will find that they understand where their interests lie, however inconsistent their votes and their political associations may appear to be with that idea. When they come to emigrate they will prove to you that they prefer free territory to slave territory. And, sir, in my judgment, if you would give these men the secret ballot, such as the people of the free States have, whereby they could give expression to their honest convictions of duty, slavery would not exist twenty years in any State of this Union.

When these men come to emigrate they exercise their own judgment; while in the matter of voting, as allowed to exercise that right in the slave States, they act upon the opinions of others.

The statistics of emigration in this country will show, that while slavery in the South has

proved a powerful repellent to immigration from the free States, freedom, in the States and Territories where it has been established, has powerfully attracted immigration from the slave States. If we consult the census returns of 1850, we shall find that the number of natives of slave States then living in the free States was nearly three times that of the natives of free States living in the slave States. The same tables will show that Pennsylvania then had nearly twice as many immigrants from slave States as Virginia had immigrants from the free States. Ohio had nearly five times as many natives of slave States within her limits as Kentucky had natives of free States. These returns show, that in 1850, all the slave States that have been added to the Union, since its formation, did not, in the aggregate, contain as many immigrants from the free States as either Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois, did, of immigrants from the slave States. In fact, Indiana alone contained nearly as many immigrants from the slave States as all the slave States together, including the old and the new, did of immigrants from the free States. What a commentary is this, sir, on the institution of slavery!

These statistics show clearly, that while slavery repels immigration from the free States, freedom attracts it from the slave States. All the natural causes and inducements have been in favor of a large emigration from the Northern States to the Southern. The natural tendency of emigration is southward rather than northward; from colder to warmer climates; from densely populated regions, where lands are dear, to more sparsely populated regions, where they are cheap.

In respect to climate, area of territory, and cheapness of lands, the advantages have been greatly in favor of the slaveholding States. Of the original thirteen States, the slaveholding have an area more than one-third larger than the free; and including all the States added to the Union up to the year 1850, the slaveholding have more than double the area of the free States.

The old free States have necessarily thrown off a large emigration, for want of territory to accommodate their rapidly-increasing populations. Naturally, a large proportion of this emigration would have been attracted by the mild climate and the cheap and fertile lands of the sunny South. But the curse of slavery was there, to counteract all the attractions which a bountiful nature had lavished upon the land, and to turn aside the current of emigration which would otherwise have flowed in upon it.

On the other hand, no such necessity for a large emigration from the slaveholding States has ever existed. They have always had abundance of room, and abundance of good and cheap lands within their own limits, to supply all the wants of an increasing population. Yet, in spite of all these inducements to remain, slavery has driven out vast hordes of their people, to seek new homes in more northern latitudes, where, although the summer sun

may shine less brightly, the vernal and autumnal breezes may blow less softly, and the blasts of winter may howl more fiercely, the glorious light of liberty sheds its benign influence upon society, and the moral atmosphere is never chilled by the blighting breath of slavery.

Mr. Chairman, no other one class of people has contributed so much to the population of that great Northwestern region, consecrated to freedom by the ordinance of 1787, as the non-slaveholders of the South. No people on the face of the earth have ever been so much benefitted by emigrating as they have.

Transplanted to a land where honest labor elevates and ennobles man, instead of depressing and degrading him, they have been raised from a condition little better than servitude, to that of sovereigns.

They have become lords of the soil, and leaders in great enterprises.

Their children have received the benefits of our common schools and our academies of learning, and become qualified for those high places which, in their own country, were seldom filled but from the slaveholding classes.

You will find them largely represented in our learned professions and in our legislative assemblies.

We send them to this Hall, and to the other branch of the National Legislature, to bear testimony to the wisdom and beneficence of that great Jeffersonian policy which forever excluded slavery and involuntary servitude from the goodly land which they inhabit, and to protest against the abandonment of that policy.

And now, sir, we have selected one of the noblest scions of that stock, to lead on the hosts of freedom to the victory which awaits us, in the great contest which is so near at hand. *Abraham Lincoln* is a fit representative in this great battle between *freedom* and *slavery*, to lead the laboring men of the nation. He is truly a representative man; he represents in his own person the great blessings of freedom over slavery.

With God's blessing, we will bear him in triumph to the Presidential mansion, there to administer the Government on the principles of Washington and Jefferson, and to have a care to some other interests of this great country of ours, than the right of man to property in his fellow man.

Under the lead of this great champion of Territorial freedom, we expect to bring back this Government to the principles and policy of its founders.

Under his administration, I trust in God, we shall set bounds to the progress of human slavery, and consecrate to freedom every foot of national territory which we now possess, or may hereafter acquire.

"*I love my country more than I love my party,*" were the inspiring words of *Hannibal Hamlin*, on the 12th day of June, 1856, when he felt it his duty to leave the party with which he had acted all his life. Let these words become the rallying cry of every patriot in the country, and the Government will be redeemed from the hands of those who have betrayed the

confidence of the people; the Union, with all its untold blessings, will be preserved; the rights of the people, and the rights of the States, under the Constitution, maintained; and *Liberty* and *Equality* triumph in all our *national domain*.

Republican Platform adopted by the Chicago Convention, May 17, 1860.

Resolved, That we, the delegated representatives of the Republican Electors of the United States, in Convention assembled, in the discharge of the duty we owe to our constituents and our country, unite in the following declarations:

First. That the history of the nation during the last four years has fully established the propriety and necessity of the organization and perpetuation of the Republican party, and that the causes which called it into existence are permanent in their nature, and now, more than ever before, demand its peaceful and constitutional triumph.

Second. That the maintenance of the principles promulgated in the Declaration of Independence, and embodied in the Federal Constitution, is essential to the preservation of our republican institutions; that the Federal Constitution, the rights of the States, and the Union of the States, must and shall be preserved; and that we reassert "these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

Third. That to the Union of the States this nation owes its unprecedented increase in population; its surprising development of material resources; its rapid augmentation of wealth; its happiness at home and its honor abroad; and we hold in abhorrence all schemes for disunion, come from whatever source they may; and we congratulate the country that no Republican member of Congress has uttered or countenanced a threat of disunion, so often made by Democratic members of Congress without rebuke and with applause from their political associates; and we denounce those threats of disunion, in case of a popular overthrow of their ascendancy, as denying the vital principles of a free Government, and as an avowal of contemplated treason, which it is the imperative duty of an indignant people strongly to rebuke and forever silence.

Fourth. That the maintenance, inviolate, of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions, according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political faith depends; and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes.

Fifth. That the present Democratic Administration has far exceeded our worst apprehensions in its measureless subserviency to the exactions of a sectional interest, as is especially evident in its desperate exertions to force the infamous Lecompton Constitution upon the protesting peo-

ple of Kansas—in construing the personal relation between master and servant to involve an unqualified property in persons—in its attempted enforcement everywhere, on land and sea, through the intervention of Congress and the Federal courts, of the extreme pretensions of a purely local interest, and in its general and unvarying abuse of the power intrusted to it by a confiding people.

Sixth. That the people justly view with alarm the reckless extravagance which pervades every department of the Federal Government; that a return to rigid economy and accountability is indispensable to arrest the system of plunder of the public Treasury by favored partisans; while the recent startling developments of fraud, and corruption at the Federal metropolis show that an entire change of Administration is imperatively demanded.

Seventh. That the new dogma that the Constitution of its own force carries slavery into any or all of the Territories of the United States, is a dangerous political heresy, at variance with the explicit provisions of that instrument itself, with contemporaneous exposition, and with legislative and judicial precedent; is revolutionary in its tendency, and subversive of the peace and harmony of the country.

Eighth. That the normal condition of all the territory of the United States is that of Freedom; that as our republican fathers, when they had abolished slavery in all our national territory, ordained that no person should be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, it becomes our duty, by legislation, whenever such legislation is necessary, to maintain this provision of the Constitution against all attempts to violate it; and we deny the authority of Congress, of a Territorial Legislature, or of any individuals, to give legal existence to slavery in any Territory of the United States.

Ninth. That we brand the recent reopening of the African slave trade, under the cover of our national flag, aided by perversions of judicial power, as a crime against humanity, a burning shame to our country and age; and we call upon Congress to take prompt and efficient measures for the total and final suppression of that execrable traffic.

Tenth. That in the recent vetoes by their Federal Governors of the acts of the Legislatures of Kansas and Nebraska, prohibiting slavery in those Territories, we find a practical illustration of the boasted Democratic principles of non-intervention and popular sovereignty, embodied in the Kansas and Nebraska bill, and a denunciation of the deception and fraud involved therein.

Eleventh. That Kansas should of right be immediately admitted as a State under the Constitution recently formed and adopted by her people, and accepted by the House of Representatives.

Twelfth. That while providing revenue for the support of the General Government by duties upon imports, sound policy requires such an adjustment of these duties as to encourage the development of the industrial interests of the whole country; and we commend that policy of national exchanges, which secures to the working men liberal wages, to agriculture remunerating prices, to mechanics and manufacturers an adequate reward for their skill, labor, and enterprise, and to the nation commercial prosperity and independence.

Thirteenth. That we protest against any sale or alienation to others of the public lands held by actual settlers, and against any view of the free homestead policy which regards the settlers as paupers or supplicants for public bounty; and we demand the passage by Congress of the complete and satisfactory homestead measure which has already passed the House.

Fourteenth. That the Republican party is opposed to any change in our naturalization laws, or any State legislation by which the rights of citizenship hitherto accorded to immigrants from foreign lands shall be abridged or impaired; and in favor of giving a full and efficient protection to the rights of all classes of citizens, whether native or naturalized, both at home and abroad.

Fifteenth. That the appropriations by Congress for river and harbor improvements of a national character, required for the accommodation and security of an existing commerce, are authorized by the Constitution and justified by an obligation of the Government to protect the lives and property of its citizens.

Sixteenth. That a railroad to the Pacific Ocean is imperatively demanded by the interests of the whole country; that the Federal Government ought to render immediate and efficient aid in its construction; and that, as preliminary thereto, a daily overland mail should be promptly established.

Seventeenth. Finally, having thus set forth our distinctive principles and views, we invite the co-operation of all citizens, however differing on other questions, who substantially agree with us in their affirmation and support.

Letters of Acceptance.

CHICAGO, May 18, 1860.

To the Hon. Abraham Lincoln:

SIR: the representatives of the Republican party of the United States, assembled in Convention at Chicago, have this day, by a unanimous vote, selected you as the Republican candidate for the office of President of the United States, to be supported at the next election; and the undersigned were appointed a committee of the Convention to apprise you of this nomination, and respectfully to request that you will accept it. A declaration of the principles and sentiments adopted by the Convention accompanies this communication.

In the performance of this agreeable duty, we take leave to add our confident assurances that the nomination of the Chicago Convention will be ratified by the suffrages of the people.

We have the honor to be, with great respect and regard, your friends and fellow-citizens,

GEORGE ASHMON, of Massachusetts,
President of the Convention.

[Signed also by the Committee.]

Mr. Lincoln's Acceptance.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., May 28, 1860.

Hon. George Ashmun, President
of the National Republican Convention:

SIR: I accept the nomination tendered me by the Convention over which you presided, and of which I am formally apprised in the let-

ter of yourself and others, acting as a committee of the Convention for that purpose.

The declaration of principles and sentiments which accompanies your letter meets my approval, and it shall be my care not to violate or disregard it in any part.

Imploring the assistance of Divine Providence, and with due regard to the views and feelings of all who were represented in the Convention; to the rights of all the States and Territories, and people of the nation; to the inviolability of the Constitution, and the perpetual union, harmony, and prosperity of all, I am most happy to co-operate for the practical success of the principles declared by the Convention.

Your obliged friend and fellow-citizen,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

A similar letter was sent to the nominee for the Vice Presidency, to which the following is the reply:

Mr. Hamlin's Acceptance.

WASHINGTON, May 30, 1860.

GENTLEMEN: Your official communication of the 13th instant, informing me that the representatives of the Republican party of the United States, assembled at Chicago on that day, had, by a unanimous vote, selected me as their candidate for the office of Vice President of the United States, has been received, together with the resolutions adopted by the Convention as its declaration of principles.

Those resolutions enunciate clearly and forcibly the principles which unite us, and the objects proposed to be accomplished. They address themselves to all, and there is neither necessity nor propriety in my entering upon a discussion of any of them. They have the approval of my judgment, and in any action of mine will be faithfully and cordially sustained.

I am profoundly grateful to those with whom it is my pride and pleasure politically to co-operate, for the nomination so unexpectedly conferred; and I desire to tender, through you, to the members of the Convention, my sincere thanks for the confidence thus reposed in me. Should the nomination, which I now accept, be ratified by the people, and the duties devolve upon me of presiding over the Senate of the United States, it will be my earnest endeavor faithfully to discharge them, with a just regard for the rights of all.

It is to be observed, in connection with the doings of the Republican Convention, that a paramount object with us is to preserve the normal condition of our territorial domain as homes for free men. The able advocate and defender of Republican principles whom you have nominated for the highest place that can gratify the ambition of man, comes from a State which has been made what it is by special action in that respect of the wise and good men who founded our institutions. The rights of free labor have there been vindicated and maintained. The thrift and enterprise which so distinguish Illinois, one of the most flourishing States of the glorious West, we would see secured to all the Territories of the Union, and

restore peace and harmony to the whole country, by bringing back the Government to what it was under the wise and patriotic men who created it. If the Republicans shall succeed in that object, as they hope to, they will be held in grateful remembrance by the busy and teeming millions of future ages.

I am, very truly, yours,
H. HAMLIN.

Hon. George Ashmun, President of the Convention, and others of the Committee.

Letter from Mr. Lincoln.

The *Illinois Staats Anzeiger* gives publicity to the following letter of Mr. LINCOLN, written about a year ago, upon a question of public policy which was then discussed in several of the States, and which is disapproved in one of the declarations of the Chicago platform:

“SPRINGFIELD, May 17, 1859.

“DEAR SIR: Your letter, in which you inquire, on your own account and in behalf of certain other German citizens, whether I approve or oppose the constitutional provision in relation to naturalized citizens which was lately enacted in Massachusetts, and whether I favor or oppose a fusion of the Republicans with the other Opposition elements in the campaign of 1860, has been received.

“Massachusetts is a sovereign and independent State, and I have no right to advise her in her policy. Yet, if any one is desirous to draw a conclusion as to what I would do from what she has done, I may speak without impropriety. I say, then, that so far as I understand the Massachusetts provision, I am against its adoption, not only in Illinois, but in every other place in which I have the right to oppose it. As I understand the spirit of our institutions, it is designed to promote the elevation of men. I am, therefore, hostile to anything that tends to their debasement. It is well known that I deplore the oppressed condition of the blacks, and it would, therefore, be very inconsistent for me to look with approval upon any measure that infringes upon the inalienable rights of white men, whether or not they are born in another land or speak a different language from our own.

“In respect to a fusion, I am in favor of it whenever it can be effected on Republican principles, but upon no other condition. A fusion upon any other platform would be as insane as unprincipled. It would thereby lose the whole North, while the common enemy would still have the support of the entire South. The question in relation to men is different. There are good and patriotic men and able statesmen in the South whom I would willingly support if they would place themselves on Republican ground; but I shall oppose the lowering of the Republican standard even by a hair's-breadth.

“I have written in haste, but I believe that I have answered your questions substantially.

“Respectfully yours,

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.
“Dr. Theodor Canisius.”